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ABSTRACT

In an effort to correct criticism of elementary curriculum blocks, the University of Delaware introduced the concept of graduate clinical responsibilities. This concept was divided into three levels: observation/participation, planning and implementing limited instructional units with emphasis on team teaching, and extended student teaching. The elementary methods block for junior year was designed to supplement Level II of the clinical program with the main objective of coordinating the content and clinical experiences in the eight required methods courses. (JA)

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A CLINICAL APPROACH TO RELEVANCY IN
EDUCATION METHODS COURSES

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

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The elementary curriculum methods block has been considered by many to be the problem child of the Teacher Education Program. It has been decried as counter productive, impractical, impersonal, and simply boring. It is usually a series of courses far removed from the classroom setting contributing theory but very little in the way of practice and pupil feedback.

In an effort to remedy this situation, the University of Delaware has introduced into its Teacher Education Program the concept of graduated clinical responsibilities. Based upon the medical model the program is outlined below.

GRADUATED CLINICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

LEVEL I

Observation of various instructional and decision making processes within educational systems and community social agencies.

Limited participation as a tutor and general instructional aide.

Philosophical, sociological and psychological analysis of the various observation and participation experiences.

LEVEL II

Planning, implementing and assessing limited instructional units. Emphasis on instructional team approach using both small group and entire class instructional activities.

LEVEL III

Extended student teaching experience under the supervision of the college instructor and the local district cooperating teacher.

SP 006 5/9

The elementary methods block for the junior year was designed to implement Level II of the clinical program. The objective is to coordinate the content and clinical experiences in the eight required methods courses.

The basic elements of design include:

1. Eight field centers are established in rural, suburban, and urban areas, both at the elementary and middle school levels.
2. Each semester will be divided into two seven week sessions which will be scheduled from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., Monday - Friday. Two methods courses will be scheduled for each seven week session.
3. Two instructors representing two different curriculum areas will be assigned to each of the eight participating schools.
4. Approximately thirty (30) students will be assigned to each center.

The schedule of the block is as follows:

ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM PROGRAM DESIGN

FALL SEMESTER 9 A.M. - 12 P.M.

<u>7 WEEKS</u>	<u>7 WEEKS</u>	<u>7 WEEKS</u>	<u>7 WEEKS</u>
SCHOOL 1 <u>LANG. ARTS--READING</u>	SCHOOL 2 <u>P.E.--SCIENCE</u>	SCHOOL 3 <u>MATH--ART</u>	SCHOOL 4 <u>SS--MUSIC</u>
1A <u>LANG. ARTS--READING</u>	2A <u>P.E.--SCIENCE</u>	3A <u>MATH--ART</u>	4A <u>SS--MUSIC</u>

<u>SCHOOL 2 P.E.--SCIENCE</u>	<u>SCHOOL 3 MATH--ART</u>	<u>SCHOOL 4 SS--MUSIC</u>	<u>SCHOOL 1 LANG. ARTS--READING</u>
2A <u>P.E.--SCIENCE</u>	3A <u>MATH--ART</u>	4A <u>SS--MUSIC</u>	1A <u>LANG. ARTS--READING</u>

<u>SCHOOL 3 MATH--ART</u>	<u>SCHOOL 4 SS--MUSIC</u>	<u>SCHOOL 1 LANG. ARTS--READING</u>	<u>SCHOOL 2 P.E.--SCIENCE</u>
3A <u>MATH--ART</u>	4A <u>SS--MUSIC</u>	1A <u>LANG. ARTS--READING</u>	2A <u>P.E.--SCIENCE</u>

<u>SCHOOL 4 SS--MUSIC</u>	<u>SCHOOL 1 LANG. ARTS--READING</u>	<u>SCHOOL 2 P.E.--SCIENCE</u>	<u>SCHOOL 3 MATH--ART</u>
4A <u>SS--MUSIC</u>	1A <u>LANG. ARTS--READING</u>	2A <u>P.E.--SCIENCE</u>	3A <u>MATH--ART</u>

1. A student moves from left to right through the sequence.
2. All centers repeat their offerings each seven weeks.
3. A student is scheduled for four centers which will allow him to complete the 3 course requirements.
4. A student's 4 center program will include elementary and middle school placement in as many educational environments as possible.

In return for participation in this program, the College of Education envisions many advantages and services to the school district. These include:

ADVANTAGES FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOL

1. Increased instructional personnel will allow each center to develop, enrich and individualize the two curriculum areas assigned to the center.
2. This design will provide a framework within which the College of Education can establish in-service programs for cooperating schools.
3. Coordinated curriculum-clinical experiences in the junior year will provide a foundation to improve the quality of the student teaching program.
4. In ensuing years curriculum areas can rotate thus enabling a center to develop and enrich its total program over a period of years.
5. Centers can be rotated within a district thus enabling a center with specific programmatic needs to receive this additional assistance.
6. Centers can depend on this program to be available in the building from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. every day for fourteen weeks each semester.

The benefits to the College of Education are numerous:

ADVANTAGES FOR THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

1. Coordination of content and clinical experience in the elementary curriculum methods program.
2. Increased student contact hours from forty-two to fifty-two hours per course.
3. Greater instructor-student interaction as a result of the thirty student-two instructor design for each center.
4. Involvement in different educational environments with the inclusion of rural, suburban and urban centers at both the elementary and middle school level.
5. Improved screening for future student teaching placements.

6. Full implementation of a preparation program based upon graduated clinical responsibilities beginning with the sophomore foundations programs and ending with an improved student teaching semester.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

The College of Education has developed a list of instructional competencies which each of the eight instructors will rate each of the students. This procedure will result in a student profile sheet which will clearly indicate the strengths and weaknesses of each student as he prepares to enter student teaching. This valuable information will be passed on to the cooperating teacher and the University supervisor for their guidance of the student through his student teacher experience.

SUMMARY

The methods block is expensive to the College of Education in terms of money. It also requires extra time and effort from the faculty; however, all indications are that the confidence and maturity being developed by our students and the increased instructional opportunities being provided elementary school children will make this effort very successful.